

September 2026

Y8 - Y11: The Greyfriars Way

Dear families

I hope you and your family have had a restful summer. As we begin a new school year, I want to say how much we are looking forward to welcoming our students back to Greyfriars on **Friday 4th September**.

A new school year is always a fresh start. It is an opportunity to build new habits, set ambitious goals and contribute positively to our community. We are incredibly proud of our students and of the warm, diverse and ambitious community we have built together.

At Greyfriars, we often talk about **doing the basics brilliantly**. These are the small things that, repeated every day, create a school that is calm, polite, purposeful and happy. We work together as a team. **This is the Greyfriars Way**.

The overwhelming majority of our students follow and lead the Greyfriars Way with diligence and pride. Of course, children will sometimes get things wrong. Part of growing up is learning from mistakes, taking responsibility and understanding how our actions affect other people.

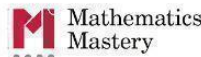
Our expectations are therefore not simply a collection of rules. They help students develop the habits they need to be successful at school and, ultimately, in life.

I have explained our expectations below, which is detailed. However, I hope it is useful to have our key expectations and the reasons behind them together **in one place so that families can refer back to it during the year**.

How do we celebrate students doing well?

We love our students and are incredibly proud of them. While this letter explains some of our expectations, it is equally important that families know just how much time we spend noticing, recognising and celebrating the things our students get right.

Celebration is part of everyday life at Greyfriars. Every day, we celebrate the form groups earning the most achievement points. Each week, we recognise individual students who have done particularly well, and throughout the year we have celebration assemblies and dedicated celebration weeks.



An academy within The Pope Francis Multi Academy Company which is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity registered in England and Wales with company number 9113542 and registered address Addison Road, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 9DG

Providing outstanding education for our children with 'The Joy of the Gospel' at its heart.

There are so many examples every day of students working hard, showing kindness, demonstrating resilience and contributing positively to our community. We want students to know that these things matter and that we notice them.

What are our expectations for uniform?

Our expectations for uniform are high. Students should arrive at school looking smart and ready to learn. At the same time, this should be affordable and so we only have three branded items*.

Students should have:

- ☐ **A black Greyfriars blazer***
- ☐ **Red school tie***
- ☐ A white shirt/blouse
- ☐ Either tailored black trousers or a black school skirt. Stretchy or denim material is not permitted.
- ☐ Plain black shoes or completely black leather-look trainers; no fabric or coloured trainers
- ☐ A grey V-neck school jumper, if desired. This is optional and may be worn under the blazer but not instead of it.
- ☐ Black/grey socks or black tights
- ☐ PE kit: **school black and red PE T-shirt*** with black PE shorts or joggers
- ☐ No jewellery other than simple ear studs; no false nails or false eyelashes

Religious dress can, of course, be worn. Students should also wear a white shirt, school tie and blazer. Headscarves/hijabs should be in keeping with the school colours of black, red or grey.

Why is uniform important?

We sometimes have conversations with students, and occasionally families, about why something seemingly small, white socks, false eyelashes or the wrong shoes, for example, matters.

Uniform is a visible sign of belonging to our team. We use the analogy of a football team: when you play for the team, you wear its kit. Our uniform works in much the same way. It creates a sense of equality, belonging and pride and is part of investing in our school community.

We have also worked hard to make our uniform affordable. Completely black leather-look trainers are permitted because they can be cheaper, more comfortable for growing feet and useful outside school. Other than the blazer, tie and PE top, uniform can be bought inexpensively from supermarkets and other retailers.

What equipment does my child need?

Arriving fully equipped is another part of learning to be organised and prepared.

Every student should have:

- ☐ Diary (provided by the school. £6 for a replacement)
- ☐ Pencil case
- ☐ Two black or blue pens
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Rubber
- ☐ Pencil and sharpener
- ☐ Scientific calculator
- ☐ Mathematical set
- ☐ Whiteboard pen

Colouring pens/pencils/highlighters and a glue stick are also useful but optional.

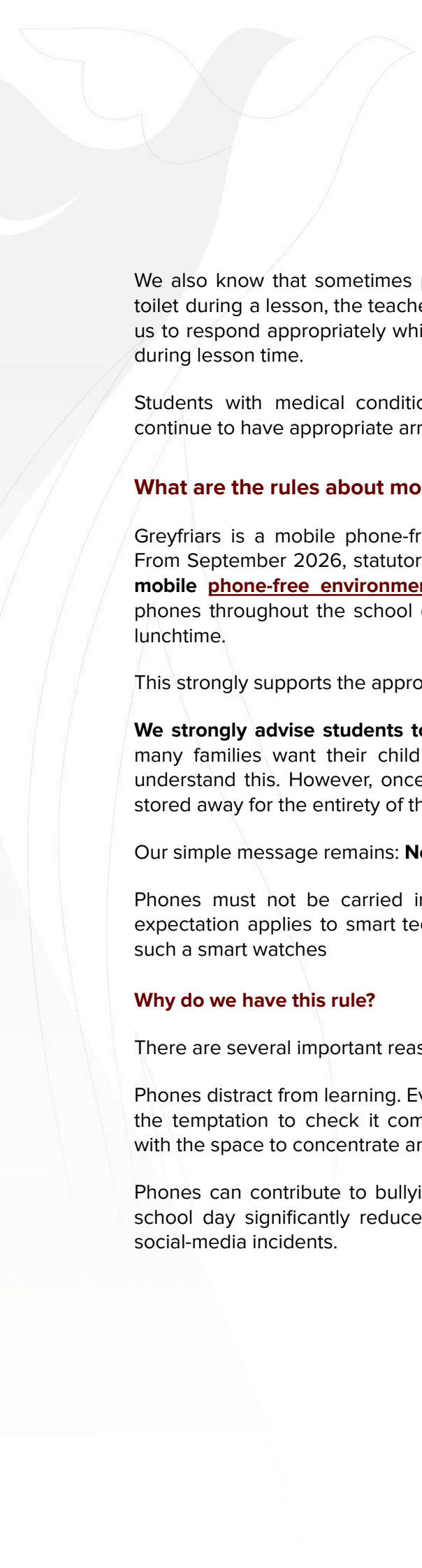
Please name uniform, PE kit and other equipment wherever possible. Named belongings have a much better chance of finding their way back to their owner!

Can students go to the toilet during lessons?

Yes, where there is a genuine need, but we expect students normally to use the toilet between lessons rather than during learning time.

Our toilets are open between lessons as well as at break and lunchtime. This means there should never normally be more than around 50 minutes during the school day when a student needs to wait.

Part of growing up is learning to plan ahead. If we were setting off on a long car journey, most of us would think about using the toilet before we left rather than waiting until we were ten minutes down the motorway. We want students gradually to develop the same habits of planning and organisation at school.



We also know that sometimes people simply need to go. If a student genuinely needs the toilet during a lesson, the teacher will contact On Call, who will collect the student. This allows us to respond appropriately while maintaining calm lessons and knowing where students are during lesson time.

Students with medical conditions, disabilities or agreed individual needs will, of course, continue to have appropriate arrangements in place.

What are the rules about mobile phones?

Greyfriars is a mobile phone-free school. This year, there is an important national change. From September 2026, statutory **Department for Education guidance expects schools to be mobile phone-free environments by default**, with students not having access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including lessons, the time between lessons, break and lunchtime.

This strongly supports the approach Greyfriars has already taken.

We strongly advise students to come to school without a phone. However, we know that many families want their child to carry a phone while travelling to and from school. We understand this. However, once students arrive at school, phones must be switched off and stored away for the entirety of the school day.

Our simple message remains: **Never Seen. Never Heard.**

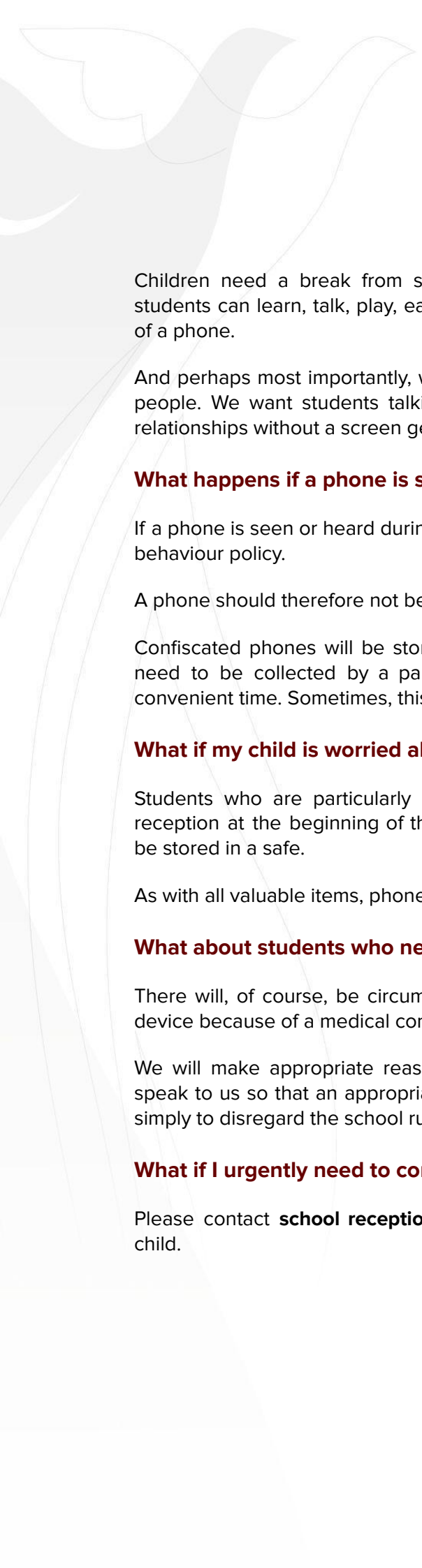
Phones must not be carried in a pocket or be visible during the school day. The same expectation applies to smart technology capable of communicating, messaging or recording such as smart watches

Why do we have this rule?

There are several important reasons.

Phones distract from learning. Even when a phone is not being actively used, notifications and the temptation to check it compete for students' attention. School should provide children with the space to concentrate and think deeply.

Phones can contribute to bullying and safeguarding concerns. Removing access during the school day significantly reduces opportunities for inappropriate recording, messaging and social-media incidents.



Children need a break from screens. School provides several hours each day in which students can learn, talk, play, eat and spend time with friends without the constant presence of a phone.

And perhaps most importantly, we want students to be present. School is a community of real people. We want students talking to one another, participating in lessons and developing relationships without a screen getting in the way.

What happens if a phone is seen or heard?

If a phone is seen or heard during the school day, it will be confiscated in accordance with our behaviour policy.

A phone should therefore not be visible in a student's hand, clothing or pocket.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely. Depending on the circumstances, a phone will need to be collected by a parent or carer at the end of the day or at another mutually convenient time. Sometimes, this may not be on the same day.

What if my child is worried about leaving their phone in their bag?

Students who are particularly concerned about loss or damage can hand their phone to reception at the beginning of the school day for safekeeping and collect it afterwards. It will be stored in a safe.

As with all valuable items, phones are brought onto the school site at the owner's risk.

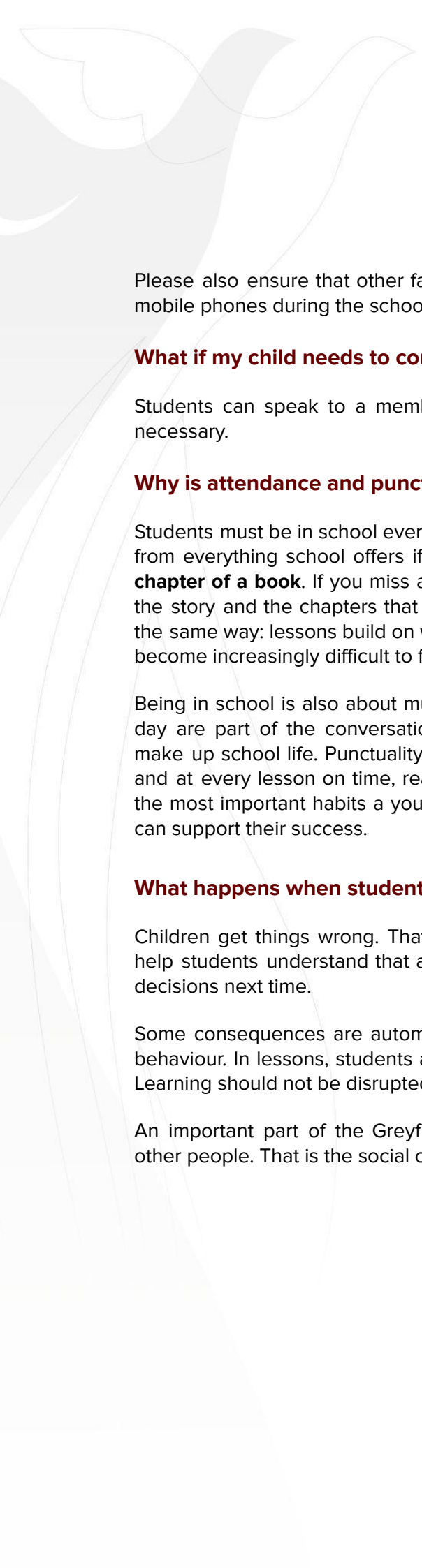
What about students who need a phone for medical or other individual reasons?

There will, of course, be circumstances in which an individual student requires access to a device because of a medical condition, disability or another agreed individual need.

We will make appropriate reasonable adjustments in these circumstances. Families should speak to us so that an appropriate arrangement can be agreed rather than asking their child simply to disregard the school rule.

What if I urgently need to contact my child?

Please contact **school reception**. We will make sure that an urgent message reaches your child.



Please also ensure that other family members know not to contact students directly on their mobile phones during the school day.

What if my child needs to contact me?

Students can speak to a member of staff and we will help them to contact home where necessary.

Why is attendance and punctuality so important?

Students must be in school every day and arrive on time. Quite simply, children cannot benefit from everything school offers if they are not here. We often describe absence as **missing a chapter of a book**. If you miss a chapter, you can try to catch up, but you have missed part of the story and the chapters that follow can be harder to understand. Learning works in much the same way: lessons build on what has come before, and regular absence creates gaps that become increasingly difficult to fill.

Being in school is also about much more than individual lessons. Students who attend every day are part of the conversations, friendships, routines, celebrations and experiences that make up school life. Punctuality matters too. We expect students to arrive at school (840am) and at every lesson on time, ready to learn. Being present, every day and on time, is one of the most important habits a young person can develop and one of the simplest ways families can support their success.

What happens when students get something wrong?

Children get things wrong. That is part of growing up. Our behaviour system is designed to help students understand that actions have consequences, repair mistakes and make better decisions next time.

Some consequences are automatic; for example, for lateness, missing homework or unsafe behaviour. In lessons, students are given clear expectations and warnings where appropriate. Learning should not be disrupted because every child has a right to learn in a calm classroom.

An important part of the Greyfriars Way is understanding that our individual choices affect other people. That is the social contract of being part of a community.

What is a consequence detention?

Where a consequence detention is issued, it takes place after school and is normally **40 minutes**. Families are notified electronically. Students are also told in school and reminded during the day. It is the student's responsibility to attend.

Detentions are deliberately calm. Students may sit in silence, reflect or complete work, and in some cases talk to the teacher about the decision to give detention. The purpose is not simply punishment; it is an opportunity to reset and understand that choices have consequences.

What happens if my child misses a detention?

Failing to attend a detention without permission is more serious than the original detention because the student has chosen not to follow a reasonable school instruction.

The consequence will therefore escalate in accordance with our behaviour policy. Repeated refusal to follow instructions may ultimately result in removal from lessons or suspension.

This escalation is entirely avoidable: attend the original detention and the matter is resolved.

If a student is absent on the day of a scheduled detention, the detention will normally be rearranged automatically.

What if we have an appointment or cannot make the detention?

We understand that genuine medical appointments and exceptional circumstances arise. Families should contact the school to explain this and arrange for the detention to be completed at another time. Students cannot rearrange their own detention.

If a student believes that a detention has been issued in error, they should raise this calmly with the appropriate member of staff. We will always correct genuine mistakes.

Do parents need to consent to an after-school detention?

No. Schools are legally able to issue after-school detentions without parental consent. We nevertheless notify families because good communication between school and home is important. Schools must also take account of individual circumstances, including ensuring that a student can travel home safely.

The overwhelming majority of Greyfriars students rarely, if ever, receive a detention. Being on time, arriving equipped, working hard and following reasonable instructions means that consequences are very easy to avoid.

Finally

We have high expectations because we have high ambitions for our students.

Knowledge, Care and Ambition are not simply words displayed around our school. They are about how we treat one another, how we approach our learning and the kind of young people we want our students to become.

The most successful schools are built through partnership between students, staff and families. Thank you for supporting us in doing the basics brilliantly and helping make Greyfriars a school in which every member of our community can flourish.

We are very much looking forward to the year ahead.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Caldwell'.

Lyndsey Caldwell
Headteacher